

What is claimed is:

1. In a process comprising at least one activity, a computer implemented method for performing an activity, comprising:
 - receiving a message to perform an activity which calls for invocation of a service
 - 5 provided by a service application, said service being invocable using a protocol;
 - obtaining a service definition for said service;
 - executing a set of logic which implements said protocol to generate a service invocation, wherein said service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said service definition, and is in compliance with said protocol; and
 - 10 sending said service invocation to said service application to invoke said service.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said protocol is an industry standard protocol.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said protocol is SOAP (simple object access protocol).
4. The method of claim 2, wherein said protocol is ebXML.
- 20 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said activity has an activity definition associated therewith, and wherein said activity definition comprises said service definition.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said service definition comprises an indication that said protocol is to be used to invoke said service.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said service definition comprises access information for accessing said service.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said access information comprises a URI (universal resource identifier).

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said access information comprises a service name.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said service definition comprises mapping information that maps one or more attributes associated with said activity to one or more parameters used by said service.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said message to perform said activity is received from a process management engine, and wherein said method further comprises:

receiving a reply from said service application which comprises one or more results of said service invocation; and

providing at least a portion of said one or more results to said process management engine to complete performance of said activity.

12. A computer implemented method for performing one or more activities, comprising:

receiving a first message to perform a first activity which calls for invocation of a first service provided by a first service application;

5 obtaining a service definition for said first service, said service definition for said first service comprising an indication that a first protocol is to be used to invoke said first service;

selecting a first set of logic based upon said indication in said service definition for said first service, said first set of logic implementing said first protocol;

10 executing said first set of logic to generate a first service invocation, wherein said first service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said service definition for said first service, and is in compliance with said first protocol; and

sending said first service invocation to said first service application to invoke said first service.

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13. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

receiving a second message to perform a second activity which calls for invocation of a second service provided by a second service application;

obtaining a service definition for said second service, said service definition for
20 said second service comprising an indication that a second protocol is to be used to invoke said second service;

selecting a second set of logic based upon said indication in said service definition for said second service, said second set of logic implementing said second protocol;

executing said second set of logic to generate a second service invocation,
wherein said second service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said
service definition for said second service, and is in compliance with said second protocol;
and

5 sending said second service invocation to said second service application to
invoke said second service.

14. A computer readable medium comprising instructions which, when
executed by one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to perform an
10 activity, said computer readable medium comprising:

instructions for causing one or more processors to receive a message to perform
an activity which calls for invocation of a service provided by a service application, said
service being invocable using a protocol;

15 instructions for causing one or more processors to obtain a service definition for
said service;

instructions for causing one or more processors to execute a set of logic which
implements said protocol to generate a service invocation, wherein said service
invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said service definition, and is in
compliance with said protocol; and

20 instructions for causing one or more processors to send said service invocation to
said service application to invoke said service.

15. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said protocol is an industry standard protocol.

16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein said protocol is SOAP (simple object access protocol).

17. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein said protocol is ebXML.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said activity has an activity definition associated therewith, and wherein said activity definition comprises said service definition.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said service definition comprises an indication that said protocol is to be used to invoke said service.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said service definition comprises access information for accessing said service.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 20, wherein said access information comprises a URL (universal resource locator).

22. The computer readable medium of claim 20, wherein said access information comprises a service name.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said service definition comprises mapping information that maps one or more attributes associated with said activity to one or more parameters used by said service.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein said message to perform said activity is received from a process management engine, and wherein said computer readable medium further comprises:

instructions for causing one or more processors to receive a reply from said service application which comprises one or more results of said service invocation; and

instructions for causing one or more processors to provide at least a portion of said one or more results to said process management engine to complete performance of said activity.

25. A computer readable medium comprising instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform one or more activities, said computer readable medium comprising:

instructions for causing one or more processors to receive a first message to perform a first activity which calls for invocation of a first service provided by a first service application;

instructions for causing one or more processors to obtain a service definition for said first service, said service definition for said first service comprising an indication that a first protocol is to be used to invoke said first service;

instructions for causing one or more processors to select a first set of logic based
 5 upon said indication in said service definition for said first service, said first set of logic implementing said first protocol;

instructions for causing one or more processors to execute said first set of logic to generate a first service invocation, wherein said first service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said service definition for said first service, and is in compliance
 10 with said first protocol; and

instructions for causing one or more processors to send said first service invocation to said first service application to invoke said first service.

26. The computer readable medium of claim 25, further comprising:

15 instructions for causing one or more processors to receive a second message to perform a second activity which calls for invocation of a second service provided by a second service application;

instructions for causing one or more processors to obtain a service definition for said second service, said service definition for said second service comprising an
 20 indication that a second protocol is to be used to invoke said second service;

instructions for causing one or more processors to select a second set of logic based upon said indication in said service definition for said second service, said second set of logic implementing said second protocol;

instructions for causing one or more processors to execute said second set of logic to generate a second service invocation, wherein said second service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of said service definition for said second service, and is in compliance with said second protocol; and

- 5 instructions for causing one or more processors to send said second service invocation to said second service application to invoke said second service.